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Atari Online News, Etc.
A-ONE Online Magazine
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A-ONE #0246

11/17/00

~ Cube - Product of Year ~ People Are Talking! ~ BSA Conducts Sting!
~ Intel's New Celerons! ~ Immigrant Settles Suit ~ MP3.com Pays Big!
~ IBM Computer Recycling ~ Midway Arcade Classics ~ Sears: Want A PSX2?
~ Asian Web Names Clash! ~ A-ONE Gets Own Domain! ~ Notator Users Wanted

-* Video Games History, New Book -
-* Comdex Light On Tangible Products! *-

-* ICANN Selects Seven New Web Address Names! *-

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->From the Editor's Keyboard
"~~~~~"

"Saying it like it is!"

Another week rolls by... Wow, it's almost time for Thanksgiving again! Where has this year gone!? It seems like it was yesterday that I was laying down a new lawn and the leaves were just coming out. Now, the leaves are gone (burying my lawn!) and the weather is starting to turn colder. Pretty soon I'll be working on putting in the rest of my lawn! Wow!

I know that Joe will mention it in his opening comments, but just in case he forgets, we here at A-ONE have just opened up our own site at our own domain. We're now located at: <http://www.atarinews.org> . Thanks to Scott Dowdle and Rob Mahlert for their time and help getting this new site up and running! And Joe has been doing a lot of testing and offering suggestions! The site is still in its infancy, but we're looking to grow and add a lot of interesting items. Please join us there and help participate. Also, you're all invited to join in on the fun in the Atari Advantage Forum on Delphi, <http://forums.delphi.com/m/main.asp?sigdir=atari> . There's plenty of interesting interactive discussions going on, with a variety of topics. Stop on by and say hello.

Until next time...

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Atari800Win Plus Released!

It is a pleasure to announce the release of Atari800Win Plus. Atari800Win Plus is the newest Atari 800/800XL/130XE/320XE and 5200 console emulator for Windows 9x/NT/2000.

Features:

- nearly 100% compatibility
- windowed and full-screen modes
- stereo (two Pokeys) sound
- supported ATR, XFD, DCM, compressed disk images, executables, cartridges and Atari800 state files
- emulation of paddles, touch tablet, light pen, light gun and Amiga/ST mice
- built-in monitor with assembler
- easy setup
- detailed context-sensitive help
- and much more

Available for download at: <http://www.a800win.atari-area.prv.pl>

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->A-ONE User Group Notes!    -   Meetings, Shows, and Info!  
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Hi from Brian Becroft - re Notator

I belong to a mailing list for Notator Owners - this is the music software on the Atari (which later became Emagic Logic on the Atari and PC)

We have a bit of a campaign going and are trying hard to contact all Notator owners.

We have a web page for signing on at:

<http://www.atari.net.nz/notator/>

```
name: notator
password: notator
```

Have a look and see what it is all about, and please contact all Notator/Creator owners you know of - even if they are on the internet or not.

If they are unable to sign on with the Internet, then maybe you can organize getting them signed on through a friend's Internet connection or if you forward to me their contact addresses, I will contact them.

My email address is:

brian@gem.win.co.nz

If you have a magazine or other form of contact with friends and members then please consider publicizing this campaign in your area

If you have any suggestions about how to contact Notator/Creator owners I would love to hear them!

Best wishes

Brian Becroft

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PEOPLE ARE TALKING
compiled by Joe Mirando
jmirando@portone.com

Hidi ho friends and neighbors. My intro is going to be quite short this week since a lot of my time right now is being spent on our new web site. No, no, not actually building it! Cruising around and checking out what's there. I've got to tell ya, even though I dislike the control that php removes from the 'art' of web design, it's still a very cool way to build a site. Whether or not it's pretty doesn't concern me too much... it's the ability to provide stuff that interests our readers that I want to keep sight of.

Dana and I (and of course Rob Mahlert, who has put in more time than I have on the site) hope that you'll visit often, let us know what you think of it and, of course, PARTICIPATE!

Special thanks also go to Scott Dowdle, our Linux guru and web space provider. Scott is also the one who has made it possible for us to use this setup because he showed Rob, who showed me.

So please, please, please, let us know what you think and post your ideas... We're wide open to suggestions.

Now on with the show!

From the comp.sys.atari.st NewsGroup
=====

Tomasz Jaskowiec wants to know if...

"Anybody knows of a good 3D Modelling/Rendering software? I mean not unix native but TOS/GEM compatible, working under TT 030."

'Zorro' tells Tomasz:

"The best is EBModel....

<http://helijah.free.fr/> "

Mario Becroft adds:

"POV-Ray is a good raytracer. There are GEM versions around.

There is a GEM modeller that supports POV-Ray called EB-MODEL (or something similar) from France. Last time I used it, it was quite buggy, but that was a while ago. It looked like it had potential.

A good integrated GEM modeller and raytracer from what I hear is Inshape 2 (not version 1). I have never been able to find a copy of Inshape 2 anywhere. I would love to see it."

Bob King asks about a popular vendor:

"I e-mailed the webmaster at system-solutions, asking them if they were the agent for Milan, had a SCSI card and were going to Stafford on Saturday. Nothing - the mail hasn't been opened, let alone answered. Does anyone know anything about SS.

Seems a funny way to conduct a business."

Shiuming Lai tells Bob:

"If you want an instant answer try the telephone. As an end user you don't realise the volume of email businesses must deal with (maybe you do, I don't know) so maybe it is just a busy time. You didn't say how long you have waited for a reply.

You can't just put a SCSI card in a Milan. The driver software must be matched to your motherboard serial number. It must be pre-ordered."

Peter West comments on System Solutions at the show:

"They will **not** be there, Karl told me some time ago.

BTW, I will if it's not flooded out on the way - look for an elderly gent with a ponytail and Atari T-shirt."

Pierre Gougelet posts:

"Nconvert (graphics converter in freeware) v2.95 is available for Atari !

You can download it on

<http://www.xnview.com> or <http://perso.wanadoo.fr/pierre.g/> "

Steve Sweet asks Pierre:

"Could you tell us something about it please?"

Someone known only as 'Joe' tells Steve:

"It is an image converting tool that handles 200 or so formats, free and there is a version for almost every platform. For the PC and a lot of other platforms/ operating systems there is also a viewer/ converter / modifier that works in over a dozen languages."

Keeper of the Flame, TJ Andrews, asks for modem help:

"I'm currently using a Mega STE and an AT&T Dataport 14.4 modem with HSModem7, STinG 1.22, Newsie 0.94, and CAB 2.7. The Mega STE serial port can be used at speeds of up to 38.4K.

My brother gave me a Hayes Accura 336 V.34+FAX modem after picking up an almost-free-after-rebate 56K modem. Unfortunately, he never had a manual for the Hayes, just used the factory settings on his PC. I tried looking for a manual on the web, and found one for the Accura 288. However, a little investigation turned up enough inconsistencies between the default settings in that manual and those of this modem, so as to make it nearly useless.

Can anyone help me with setting this modem? I imagine compression should be turned off, but that particular S-register is one of the places where the downloaded manual disagrees with the modem - if that S-register indeed still performs that function. Every modem I've had faster than 300 baud has had to have a bit of tweaking before I could get it to work properly with the Atari I was using at the time, and I imagine this one will be no exception."

Derryck Croker tells TJ:

"Since you don't know what your brother's PC had been doing to that modem

behind his back, I'd suggest resetting it to factory default with at&f

You should find that does the trick. Then you might have to do a few tweaks to get it to report connect speed rather than the DTE rate etc, once happy save it back to user profile 0.

No need to turn compression off."

Steve Sweet tells TJ:

"The MegaSTE's Modem 2 port can be used up to 230400 baud, Modem 1 will go to 115200."

TJ tells Steve:

"I have the Hayes Accura 336 configured to the factory defaults and connected to the Modem 1 port. It works fine - as long as I don't try to set the port speed higher than 19200. I'm trying to use STinG 1.22 and HSModem7, and the only place I can find to change the port speed is from within the SERIAL.CPX. If I try to set that to 38400 and use the STing Dialer, I see the RD and SD lights flash, then the command ATZ appears on the screen. Then it just sits there, I think waiting for the OK response, which it probably already got, but missed.

Any ideas? While I'm finding 19200 on the Mega STE to be noticeably faster than my old Mega ST4 at 14400, I'm shamelessly greedy and want every bps I can get."

Steve tells TJ:

"I find when i get a new modem that it needs training, set your port speed to whatever the modem needs, use a terminal, type ATZ, then AT&W to store, Some modems requires their DPS to cop a sniff at what its dealing with."

Bob King posts this about his Milan:

"I've been tinkering with my Auto files on my Milan and it's messed up again. What happens now is that MINTNP stops the loading with the message:

```
Initializing core memory
*****bytes of ST RAM
*****bytes of FAST RAM found.
```

Can any MINT experts out there help please. This is being sent on my Falcon and except for being slower and not such high end graphics, its much more stable and lets be honest idiot proof."

Odd Skancke tells Bob:

"If you have ramfs.xdd in your /mint or /multitos folder, try to remove it. At least I know that kernel 1.15.10b has ramdisk built in, and might conflict with the xdd one. Other than that, just try to remove xfs or xdd's until you find out which cause the prob.

Well, the Milan should be just as stable [as your Falcon]. I know that my Hades060 is at least, if not more stable than my TT. But it

took a while before I got to that point."

Peter West posts this about misbehaving files:

"Some time ago there was discussion here (or in an atari conference on Cix) about a problem in deleting files/folders from a drive.

I have just had a similar problem, whose solution may be of use to others: I had copied a folder `www.scooter-pcb.de` from my CAB folder, which is on a partition with LFN enabled, to another partition that was DOS 8+3 only. This showed up as `WWW-SCOO..DE` in the copy, and while the folder could be opened normally by double-clicking on it, and the files in it were OK, when I tried to obtain Info about its length, and later to delete it, this was refused with an error message that the 'File can not be read (TOS -33)', meaning 'File not found'.

The problem was the two dots, which aren't allowed on 8+3 file systems. Only after I used VFATCONF to activate long file names on the partition temporarily could I access the folder info; renaming it to one dot and switching off LFN again allowed the info to be accessed and deleted under 8+3 as well.

So if you have problems deleting a file or folder that has an unusual name, enable LFNs temporarily for the partition."

Jenka Gerhard tells Peter:

"Sounds very interesting but I suspect this is only possible with MagiC, isn't it ?"

Peter tells Janka:

"Mainly, but MiNT as well I believe - in fact any file system that permits LFNs. But I don't know if there is a utility similar to VFATCONF for them..."

Edward Baiz posts this bit of info:

"I talked with the authors of Photoline about an upgrade for the Atari version of Photoline. Of course I got the familiar answer. "The Atari market is too small, blah, blah, blah". They also said that a C++ compiler is needed. I suggest Pure C, but they informed that it is only a regular C compiler and not a C++ compiler.

I then came back and ask them for a possible patch that would allow me to run Photoline under Magic. Here is what was said to me:

"Pure C is very old and does only plain C, no C++. For such a big program like PhotoLine 32 is, we need C++.

PhotoLine has no problem on MagiC. It runs without problems on MagicPC and MagicMac. I think there is a problem with Magic for Hades. Try to contact Axel Gehringer `ag_comtech@t-online.de` I think he tested for PhotoLine on Magic with Hades.

--Gerhard Huber [Computerinsel GmbH]
support@pl32.com - <http://www.pl32.com>"

This kind of reminded me of the olden days when I was writing letters to Roberta Williams of Sierra Online... "Why no version of King's Quest for the 130XE?"

If anyone has any ideas or comments, give Gerhard an email."

Marc-Antón Kehr tells Edward:

"Some time ago, I asked about updating Atari-PhotoLine too, and Gerhard Huber told me that there would have to be a minimum of 500 people that want PhotoLine Atari before they'd do anything on it.

Perhaps we should count through. <grin> "

Edward replies:

"Not a bad idea. Maybe we can get to 500 and see if they will give us an upgrade."

Damir Kaknjo asks for help with reading Microsoft Word files:

"I need a program that can read MS Word files on Atari 1040 ST. (Like Wordpad)

Can anyone give me an address or something?"

Jim Logan tells Damir:

"The Papyrus 8 demo will but I don't know if it runs on a 1040."

Marek Dankowski tells Damir:

"mswordview.ttp convert your M\$ Word document (.doc) to ASCII file (.txt)."

TJ Andrews asks about hard drives:

"I wrote a few days ago about putting a hard drive into my Mega STE. Since then, I now have a Maxtor 540S drive to try out. All I have is the drive - and a plastic bubble-wrap envelope.

I went to CAB and the web and a Google search turned up a data sheet on the Maxtor 540S/SL drives. The information on that sheet, coupled with notations printed on the drive board itself, let me know that parity is disabled and I know which jumpers to remove to get SCSI unit 0.

The only problem I have is with a jumper labeled "JP8". The data sheet says the following: (quotation marks appear as they do on the sheet)

JP8 Jumper=Factory Default. "Don't remove"
Drive will auto configure terminator power.

Naturally, on the drive I have the jumper on JP8 has been removed.

Does anybody know more about this? I don't see anything on the drive or the sheet about connecting some sort of SCSI terminator, so I assume the drive circuitry is supposed to be deciding if I need termination or not. I haven't the slightest idea what removing jumper JP8 does. Should I take one of the jumpers I remove to get the SCSI ID and put it on JP8? Or should I leave well enough alone?"

Greg Goodwin tells TJ:

"If they say don't remove, don't remove. Some of these jumpers are for

testing only, although your post hints that the jumper is for auto configure terminator power. If this is the case, the only reason you'd want to remove it is if the drive didn't work properly with it on."

Jo Even Skarstein adds:

"Usually, but not on the Mega STE. The internal SCSI interface can actually be damaged if the drive is terminated, so **don't** terminate the drive. You can find more information here:
<http://atari.nvg.org/scsihost/> "

Well folks, that's it for this week. Make sure you check out the new website and let us know what you think and what you'd like to see there. Tune in again next week, same time, same station, and be ready to listen to what they are saying when...

PEOPLE ARE TALKING

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->In This Week's Gaming Section - Sears: Want A PSX2?   Gameday 2001!
    " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " NCAA Final Four!   Final Fantasy IX!
                                     Midway's Arcade Classics!   Casper!
                                     And much more!
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->A-ONE's Game Console Industry News      -   The Latest Gaming News!
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Sears.com Gives Hope to Those Wanting a Sony PlayStation 2

There's hope for those who want a Sony PlayStation 2 this holiday season. To give customers a fair chance at getting the hottest game in the U.S., sears.com will be giving away 250 Sony PlayStation 2 units -- 50 each week for five weeks. The promotion begins on November 15 with the first drawing on November 20.

In the "Sony PlayStation 2 Sweepstakes" on sears.com, each sears.com order of \$50 or more will qualify for an entry. There are no limits to the number of qualifying entries on sears.com, and entries remain valid through the duration of the sweepstakes. This means those qualifying to enter the first week will have a chance to win during any of the 250 drawings within the five weeks of the sweepstakes.

"This is an opportunity for sears.com to reward its holiday shoppers with the chance to win what's arguably the most desirable gift this holiday season," said Joe Charno, vice president of marketing for sears.com. "At

this low price point, nearly every sears.com customer will have a chance to 'get in the game.'"

Shoppers will find on sears.com: home electronics, home office equipment, computers, tools, lawn and garden equipment, product for baby, major and small appliances, cookware and fitness equipment. Sears is also offering this sweepstakes on wishbook.com, where customers will find over 2,100 toys, gifts and jewelry.

Qualifying weeks for the Sony PlayStation 2 Holiday Sweepstakes are Nov. 15 through Nov. 19, Nov. 20 through Nov. 26, Nov. 27 through Dec. 3, Dec. 4 through Dec. 10, Dec. 11 through Dec. 17. Drawings will occur on Nov. 20, Nov. 27, Dec. 4, Dec. 11 and Dec. 22.

Shoppers will automatically be credited for one (1) entry for every purchase order at www.sears.com and www.wishbook.com of \$50 or more, excluding shipping, taxes, and electronic coupons.

The sweepstakes is open to residents of all 50 United States and the District of Columbia. Since the sears.com delivery area is limited to the continental United States, Alaska and Hawaii residents cannot enter through sears.com. Entries by mail are accepted. See www.sears.com for complete rules.

"WWF No Mercy" for Nintendo 64 Hits Retail

THQ Inc. and JAKKS Pacific, Inc. announced the release of the latest World Wrestling Federation Entertainment licensed video game, "WWF No Mercy" for the Nintendo 64.

Developed by Aki Corp. of Japan, this eagerly anticipated title is now available at major retail outlets nationwide. With THQ and JAKKS at the helm, the World Wrestling Federation franchise has sold well over 2.5 million copies in North America to date for Nintendo 64, Game Boy Color, PlayStation, and Dreamcast game console systems.

"As the sequel to the highly successful 'WWF Wrestlemania 2000,' we are confident that 'WWF No Mercy' will give wrestling fans more of what they hunger for," stated Michael Rubinelli, vice president of product development, THQ. "'WWF No Mercy' delivers more superstars, more gameplay modes, and more hard hitting action than ever before."

"'WWF No Mercy' is destined to be another wrestling classic," stated Nelo Lucich, director of interactive, JAKKS Pacific. "'From backstage to center ring, the level of detail will simply amaze both Nintendo 64 and World Wrestling Federation enthusiasts."

With more than 65 World Wrestling Federation superstars to choose from, new double-team moves, backstage areas, enhanced graphics, plus all-new gameplay modes including Ladder Match and Tag Team Match, "WWF No Mercy" players will enjoy even more of what makes Wrestling World Federation bedlam so popular.

The "'Create-A-Superstar" feature is back and more robust than ever, allowing players to design characters in unprecedented detail, from physical size and appearance, to personality, attitude, and of course, signature moves. "'WWF No Mercy" will also offer all new storylines, a

``Special Referee" feature and even a ``Create a Pay-Per-View Event."

Acclaim Sports' HBO Boxing Ships to Retailers On
Tuesday, November 21st

Acclaim Sports announced that HBO Boxing for the PlayStation game console will ship to retail outlets nationwide on Tuesday, November 21st.

HBO Boxing is the first HBO Sports boxing video game to be produced under a licensing agreement with HBO Properties. The title incorporates the distinct look and feel of HBO Sports boxing telecasts with authentic HBO Sports graphics and theme music, along with real-life boxing venues.

HBO Boxing exclusively features undisputed light heavyweight champion of the world, Roy Jones Jr., and George Foreman, the former two-time world heavyweight champion, plus 35 additional world famous boxers. Fighters will start in gyms and work their way up the ladder of HBO Sports' boxing series: KO Nation, HBO Boxing After Dark, HBO World Championship Boxing, and the pinnacle of professional prize fighting -- TVKO Pay-Per-View from HBO. The renowned HBO Sports broadcast team of Jim Lampley, Larry Merchant, and Harold Lederman will provide in-game commentary.

Jones Jr., considered by many boxing experts as ``the best pound for pound fighter in the world," stars in a national television campaign that begins after Thanksgiving and runs through December. Jones Jr. and Foreman are also featured on the HBO Boxing packaging, print advertising and promotional materials.

``Our television spot captures the showmanship and charisma of Roy Jones Jr., who embodies the heart and soul of HBO Boxing," said Michael Jerchow, director of licensing for Acclaim Sports.

``I am excited to headline Acclaim Sports' debut HBO Boxing title," said Jones Jr. ``The video game accurately reflects the electricity and excitement of what it's really like to fight on HBO."

Joining Jones and Foreman in HBO Boxing is a stellar stable of boxers including former legends, current champions and future stars such as: Rocky Marciano, Jake LaMotta, Joe Louis, Jack Dempsey, Sugar Ray Robinson, David Tua, Ken Norton, Marvelous Marvin Hagler, Floyd Patterson, Larry Holmes, Roberto Duran, Hector Camacho, Sr., Archie Moore, Michael Grant, Ike Quartey, Arturo Gatti, Monte Barrett, Terry Norris, Ray Mancini, John Molnar, Bernard Hopkins, Vito Antuofermo, Aaron Pryor, David Reid, Earnie Shavers, Hasim Rahman, Angel Manfredy, Vinnie Pazienza, Mark Johnson, Paul Spadafora, Fernando Vargas, Virgil Hill, and Junior Jones; plus female boxing sensations Mia St. John and Bridgett Riley.

Sega Soars to New Heights With Skies of Arcadia,
an Aerial Epic for Sega Dreamcast

Imagine a magic-infused fantasy world where adventurers journey through the air as they discover new continents and combat roving bands of sky pirates. Sega of America, Inc. announced that this fantasy realm is now a reality

with ``Skies of Arcadia," a dynamic new RPG for the 128-bit Internet-ready Sega Dreamcast videogame console. Creator Rieko Kodama, who has been dubbed by the industry as ``The First Lady of RPGs," has woven an intricate tale that features over 300 unique characters and boasts more than fifty hours of gameplay spanning two discs. Also, by embellishing ``Skies of Arcadia" with mini-games and downloadable elements, this old school-styled RPG is packed with a new school punch.

The adventure sets sail in vast azure skies, where people live on lush floating islands and travel in airships. Yet all is not well. Disrupting the peaceful order is the evil Valuan Empire, intent on bringing the entire world under an iron rule. In order to halt this exercise in terror, players assume the role of Vyse, a boy who must become a hero by collecting magical stones spread across six distinct worlds, each with its own diverse culture, language, traditions, and style of dress. Throughout his adventure, Vyse and his companions can interact with more than 300 characters, cast more than 36 magic spells, and customize 70 different weapons, illustrating the immense breadth of the game.

Due to her notable work with the original ``Phantasy Star" series, Rieko Kodama is an RPG legend. Improving upon her own template, she has created boundless environments, unforgettable characters, and an involving storyline to elevate ``Skies of Arcadia" beyond its contemporaries, while still retaining a classic feel.

``Sega has a deep heritage in delivering an incredible RPG experience," said Rich Briggs, product manager, Sega of America. ``With the popularity of RPGs expanding beyond a niche audience, now more than ever is the time to showcase `Skies of Arcadia.'"

Skill and strategy are key components in ``Skies of Arcadia." Using a classic turn-based combat, gamers will battle hand-to-hand and ship-to-ship. Both modes of fighting require planning several factors, from selecting the choice of weapons to the timing of attacks. Players can also customize their battle ship and headquarters, choose their pirate flag and assemble a crew of up to 22 members, each of which will affect the storyline and gameplay.

Gamers can enhance their RPG experience by playing special mini-games or by downloading bonus items from the Internet to their VMU (Visual Memory Unit). Combine this with a full 3D world to explore, 360-degree freedom of movement in your sky-ship, and the unique ``Spirit Bar" in battle, and ``Skies of Arcadia" becomes the first epic RPG for Dreamcast.

``Skies of Arcadia" is rated ``T" for Teen, and available for \$49.95 at retailers nationwide and at www.sega.com.

Square Ships FINAL FANTASY IX for the PlayStation

Square Electronic Arts L.L.C. announced the release of FINAL FANTASY IX for the PlayStation game console. FINAL FANTASY IX, the latest title in the highly acclaimed FINAL FANTASY series, is a role-playing game that takes players through an immersive storyline with completely new characters and environments that are rendered using the latest in 3D graphic digital technology. FINAL FANTASY IX harkens back to earlier FINAL FANTASY installments by recreating fairy tale settings and dwarf-like characters that came to define the FINAL FANTASY series.

'When FINAL FANTASY IX hit store shelves in Japan this July it had pre-sold one million units in a record-breaking 17 days. Since then it has sold 2.8 million units to date," said Jun Iwasaki, president of Square Electronic Arts. 'We think this version will find similar success in the U.S. while simultaneously extending the life of the original PlayStation game console."

Sales of FINAL FANTASY IX in Japan have propelled the life-to-date sales of series to an astounding 30 million units, making the FINAL FANTASY franchise one of the best-selling series in the history of videogames.

FINAL FANTASY IX begins with a group of bandits, which includes a skilled thief named Zidane, travelling to the town of Alexandria for a pageant being held in honor of Queen Brahne. Once there they befriend a royal knight, a lonely magician and the Queen's daughter, the beautiful Princess Garnet, who join their party. The group discovers that the Queen has begun using highly advanced magical weapons to terrorize neighboring kingdoms. Helping her is a powerful sorcerer named Kuja, who has been supplying the Queen with magic. The rag tag group must band together to stop the Queen before she marshals her evil forces to carry out her deadly plan.

FINAL FANTASY IX features eight different playable characters such as Zidane or Princess Garnet. Each character has his or her own strengths and weaknesses, making each one completely unique. For instance, Vivi has the ability to cast black magic such as, Fire, to invoke physical harm on the enemies. However, in terms of curing himself or others, Vivi lacks this ability. Characters are divided into categories according to ability, how that character will develop, and what equipment they will be able to use. The game's battle system, Active Time Battle System, allows up to four people in the party to be active during battle. Players must consider each character's varying abilities to defeat opponents.

Players follow the party through eerie dark forests and medieval kingdoms as they encounter fearsome monsters and various level bosses such as a plant monster that traps characters in a vinyl cage on his head and a creature called Black Waltz who uses both blizzard and fire magic on his opponents. Players defeat these enemies with a variety of weapons and spells. Each character begins with one special power and unique weapon, and collect more as they progress through the game. Players also have the ability to summon Eidolons, powerful spirits who assist the characters in battle. Many of these Eidolons are returning characters from FINAL FANTASY VIII, such as the ice queen, Shiva, who's powerful ice attacks decimate all who stand in her way.

As with previous FINAL FANTASY games, this latest title offers cutting-edge graphic artistry in both the full-motion video (FMV) sequences and gameplay. Sequences capture visual details such as large, stormy ocean waves that show ocean spray blowing in the wind or brilliant red and gold flames of a building explosion that cascade from the sky like fireworks.

To assist players in their journey, a complete online strategy guide for FINAL FANTASY IX will be made available to players at PlayOnline.com (www.playonline.com) starting today. The online guide offers a complete walkthrough, character information, equipment data, bestiary, ability list and more. Square Electronic Arts has teamed with BradyGAMES to create this new interactive format for the online and printed strategy guide. Using the keywords found throughout the printed guide, players can log on to PlayOnline.com and type in the keyword for in-depth information on that section of the game. Currently, PlayOnline.com offers a preview to

PlayOnline, a comprehensive network entertainment and community service which is scheduled to launch in 2001 in Japan, followed by the U.S.

FINAL FANTASY IX is compatible with DUALSHOCK analog controller and has a suggested retail price of U.S. \$40. The game carries an ESRB rating of 'T' (Teen). BradyGAMES' FINAL FANTASY IX Official Strategy Guide will be priced at \$12.99.

It's Party Time With Sonic Shuffle for Sega Dreamcast

Get in your RSVP! Today Sega of America throws the ultimate party and everyone is invited when Sonic the Hedgehog and friends make their debut in 'Sonic Shuffle' for the 128-bit, Internet-ready Sega Dreamcast videogame console. This fun and action-packed party game takes America's favorite hedgehog and puts him in a whole new magical world filled with mini-challenges and other unique surprises. With comic book like characters, real-time 3D environment models and different gameplay modes, gamers will be immersed in an interactive world where they will be entertained for hours.

In 'Sonic Shuffle,' the Guardian Angel Illumina needs help. A mysterious monster, Void has locked up the power of the Precioustones, powerful crystals made from the dreams and hopes of people from every dimension. It's up to Sonic and his friends to help recover the Precioustones and save the land of Maginary Whirl from the torment of a thousand bad dreams.

'Sonic Shuffle' takes place on a game board where mini-games, bosses and trivia await players. There are 5 adventure boards to choose from, each with its own unique themes including a magical train, mysterious amusement park and a spooky tower! Movement on the board is determined by drawing cards from a digital deck, each card tells you how many spaces to advance. To keep things interesting, gamers have the option of playing in different modes such as Story mode and Battle mode.

Players can choose one of eight Sega characters, each with their own special moves, attacks and abilities, to journey across the board during the quest to confront Void and retrieve the Precioustones. The game becomes even more exciting and truly interactive when gamers play with three of his or her friends to compete and see who will be the first to get the Precioustones.

'Sonic Shuffle' will be a treat for the entire family bringing the fun of board games to life in exciting 3D interactive games packed with surprises," said Gwen Marker, marketing communications manager, Sega of America. "With different mini-games that have players battle one on three, two on two, button jamming and on a split screen, kids of all ages will want to join in the fun."

'Sonic Shuffle' is now available for \$39.95 in retail stores nationwide or at www.sega.com and is rated E for Everyone.

989 Sports' NFL GameDay 2001 Kicks Off for the
Playstation 2 Computer Entertainment System

Continuing the tradition of delivering intense NFL football action through

amazing gameplay and stunning visuals, NFL GameDay 2001 from the 989 Sports development team hits store shelves this week for the PlayStation 2 computer entertainment system, Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. announced. NFL GameDay 2001 features NFL teams and players, 3D player and stadium models scaled with incredible detail and realism and more than 1,100 position-specific motion-captured moves from 14 NFL players. Longtime favorites Dick Enberg and Phil Simms add to the GameDay experience with their famous and significantly broadened play-by-play commentary.

The gritty football action and award-winning gameplay that GameDay fans appreciate and love is brought to life like never before with new visual breakthroughs including the exclusive new ProTalk feature. Gamers can now actually see animated lip-service offered up by players and referees, adding to the total NFL experience. NFL GameDay 2001 sports realistic graphics with each NFL player depicted in amazing detail as they are scaled to their actual size, weight and body style. Utilizing the technology afforded by the new PlayStation 2, details such as actual player faces, skin tones, face mask styles, jerseys, arm bands and neck rolls make the players on the field appear to be as close to the real thing as possible. Stadium interiors are richly detailed and enhanced by animated backgrounds and historic landmarks and during the game, players will actually experience wear and tear on the playing field.

"NFL GameDay 2001 for the PlayStation 2 will thrill fans of the franchise as the 989 Sports development team has brought the integrity of the GameDay experience to a whole new level," said Ami Blaire, director, product marketing, Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. "The 989 Sports team is tapping into the capabilities of the PlayStation 2 to create an amazing looking title with great gameplay and true-to-life, gritty football action."

NFL GameDay 2001's unprecedented 60 frames-per-second gameplay allows gamers to feel the smoothest and most responsive gameplay ever created. For the first time, each player occupies their own personal, 3D space, allowing gamers to move around the field like a true ball carrier during an NFL game. Smarter Artificial Intelligence (A.I.) has computer-controlled opponents exposing tendencies on both the offense and defense. The signature Total Control Passing feature allows players to lead or under throw receivers in any direction by simply pressing the directional buttons putting gamers in total control.

Now, NFL GameDay 2001 features animations including drag downs, shoves, gang tackles, low and high-wrap tackles, upending tackles, across-the-body "shoestring" catches, sideline "tip-toe" catches and one-handed catches that help capture the intensity of real NFL action. Players can even break ankle tackles and drag would-be tacklers on second and third efforts.

NFL GameDay 2001 reflects the latest NFL trends through actual NFL player input -- from motion-captured animations to plays designed with the help of real NFL players. Players motion captured for the NFL GameDay series are among the game's top names, Buccaneers FB Mike Alstott, Steelers RB Jerome Bettis, Raiders WR Tim Brown, and Giants CB Jason Sehorn. Among the more than 55 NFL pro stars creating the authentic playbooks for NFL GameDay 2001 were Buccaneers DL Warren Sapp, Vikings QB Daunte Culpepper, Bengals RB Corey Dillon and Dolphins LB Zach Thomas.

GameDay includes many of the features that gamers have come to expect such as the "General Manager Mode" that lets the gamer play in multiple seasons as a coach, player or general manager. The "Draft War Room" feature provides the gamer with a report of team weaknesses allowing

players to determine needs on draft day. Gamers can control the everyday activities of a team over several seasons while drafting, trading and signing free agent players. The revolutionary "Play Editor" lets the gamer design custom plays and save them to a playbook.

Players can also direct how and where each player will move by assigning individual routes, blocking schemes and defensive alignments and assignments. NFL GameDay 2001 has also refined the "Create Player" feature, allowing gamers to customize a player's physical appearance, salary and mental makeup.

NFL GameDay 2001 for the PlayStation 2 Computer Entertainment System Key Features:

- Award-winning signature gameplay including a new feature that allows gamers to see and listen to the emotion of the NFL like never before with the exclusive ProTalk feature, where timed, lip-synched animations bring athletes, coaches and referees to life
- Hundreds of new plays designed with the help of 55 NFL players containing the latest trends, formations and plays
- All-new 3D player and stadium models and tons of motion captured animations from 14 different NFL players
- NFL teams and players scaled to actual height, weight and body style
- Amazing visuals including accurate player details such as visors, wristbands and gloves
- New action-moves such as across-your-body catches, sideline "Tip-Toe" catches and one-handed catches help add to the excitement of the pros
- New flip tackles add excitement and extend the intensity and dynamics of true pro football
- Actual NFL stadiums feature historic landmarks and grass that experience wear and tear as the game progresses
- Play-by-play legend Dick Enberg and color commentator Phil Simms return with broader and more conversational commentary and insight
- In-depth NFL player ratings and updated 2000 team rosters, including rookies, free agent signings and trades
- "GM Mode" lets the gamer be the coach, player or general manager over multiple seasons, operating with a salary cap. The new "Draft War Room" feature alerts player to team weaknesses. Create, draft, sign, trade and release players and free agents -- just like a real GM
- In-game help menus assist new users who are unfamiliar with the in-game controls
- Team match-ups detail offensive and defensive strengths and weaknesses
- Design plays and save them to a custom playbook with the revolutionary "Play Editor" allowing gamers to direct how and where players move by assigning pass routes, blocking schemes and defensive maneuvers
- Create a player with the updated "Create Player" feature -- customize a player's physical appearance, such as face style, face mask, neck rolls, salary and mental makeup
- Players perform as in real-life: Marshall Faulk jukes to elude flailing arms, Eddie George punishes would-be tacklers and Randy Moss elevates over shorter defenders to grab the deep ball
- Multiple weather conditions including wind, snow and rain as well as player injuries affect gameplay, testing gamers true skills and knowledge
- Comprehensive season statistical tracking in 163 categories -- for either a team or a player
- Gameplay modes include preseason, 2000-2001 NFL season play, playoffs, Super Bowl and Pro Bowl
- Pro Bowl selections are based upon the current season with weekly voting updates

- "Throwback" uniforms let gamers relive the past with a favorite team
- Includes every past Super Bowl team such as the '75 Steelers, '85 Bears and '94 49ers
- Genuine NFL stadium, game and crowd sounds
- Four playing perspectives and a free-floating 3D camera for dynamic TV-style presentation
- Four levels of difficulty -- Rookie, Veteran, All-Pro and Hall of Fame
- Complete substitution capability
- Up to 8 players with Multitap (for PlayStation 2)
- Officially licensed by the NFL and PLAYERS INC

The independent Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) rates NFL GameDay 2001 ``E" for ``Everyone."

989 Sports' NCAA Final Four 2001 Brings Authentic College Hoops to The Playstation

Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. announced that NCAA Final Four 2001 from 989 Sports, the next installment in the highly successful college basketball videogame series, takes to the court this week for the new PS one console and the PlayStation game console. NCAA Final Four 2001 sets the standard for college hoops with all-new player models and arena graphics, more than 300 Division I-A schools from 31 conferences and new gameplay features that take basketball fans to the heart of the college game.

NCAA Final Four 2001 looks the part of the big man on campus with all-new player models that are scaled to actual player height, weight and body style. Intricate college arenas appear just as their real-life counterparts, while additional touches such as increased team momentum from a sixth Man Meter, real college fight songs and crowd chants bring to life the passion surrounding college basketball.

``NCAA Final Four 2001 captures the intense spirit that makes college basketball unique," said Ami Blaire, director, product marketing, Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. ``We have included the nuances of college hoops through the hundreds of NCAA teams included -- each with their own unique styles -- authentically modeled arenas and true-to-life fight songs and chants."

To further increase the realism of the game, more than 50 motion captured animations incorporating movements of former college basketball stars have been added. More than 20 dunks, post-up plays, no look passes, fade-away shots and many more exciting moves are part of each player's arsenal.

NCAA Final Four 2001 takes fans through the rigors of a full college season with more than 300 Division I-A schools representing 31 different conferences, from the powerhouses to the Cinderella-producers. Fight for the league title and follow the ``Bubble Watch" feature as players track their team's progress towards a berth in the 64-team NCAA Tournament. Each team in NCAA Final Four 2001 runs its offense and defense similar to the style of play true to each college. Team-specific playbooks allow players to execute trademark strategies including Florida's full court press, Arizona's three-point offense and Temple's stifling match-up zone.

Further complementing the features college basketball fans expect, ESPN announcer and former Indiana star Quinn Buckner returns to call the action with brand new commentary paired with a TV-style presentation complete with

multiple camera angles and pop-up statistics. Adding to the fun is comprehensive stat tracking for teams and individual players in 32 different categories plus awards including first and second team All-American, National Player of the Year and Conference Player of the Year. All new Artificial Intelligence (A.I.) results in the most advanced computer opponents ever implemented into a college basketball game, while an improved Touch Shooting Meter gives players better shot accuracy and more control.

NCAA Final Four 2001 Key Features:

- Compatible with the new PS one console, PlayStation game console and the new PlayStation2 computer entertainment system
- More than 300 Division I-A teams from 31 different conferences
- All-new 3D player models scaled to actual height, weight and body style
- College arenas designed to mirror their real-life counterparts
- Play-by-play commentary by ESPN college basketball announcer Quinn Buckner
- More than 50 new motion captured animations by former college standouts (and current NBA pros) including players congratulating each other, coaches yelling orders from the sidelines, the ability to pass after starting to shoot, put-back slam dunks and the ability to run the baseline while inbounding the ball (when legal)
- Real college atmosphere with animated crowds, cheerleaders, chants and fight songs
- The "Touch Shooting Meter" provides the gamer complete control over player shooting abilities
- The "6th Man Meter" returns to fire up the home crowd and help the home team make shots
- Authentic college-specific playbooks
- "Bubble Watch" feature gives the gamer updates on team performance during the season-long run to the NCAA Tournament
- Signature Icon Passing, Icon Cutting and Icon Switching returns to give the gamer ultimate control of his players on both the offense and defense
- Features all Division I-A conferences including such favorites as the Pac-10, Atlantic 10, Big 12, Big East, SEC, Big Ten, Big Sky, Big West, Ivy League, Conference USA, Missouri Valley, MAAC, Northeast, Southern, Sun Belt, TransAmerica, WAC, West Coast, Mid Continent and Mid-American
- Awards -- first and second team All-Americans, National Player of the Year and Conference Player of the Year
- Four game modes: Tournament, Exhibition, Season and Arcade
- Four gameplay settings -- Freshman through Senior
- Up to eight players can play with Multi Tap

The independent Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) rates NCAA Final Four 2001 ``E" for ``Everyone."

Casper Celebrates 60th Birthday With New Game for the Playstation Game Console

In conjunction with Casper's 60th birthday celebration, Sound Source Interactive Inc. announced the release of ``Casper: Friends Around the World," a new title for the PlayStation game console.

The game ships just in time for the holiday shopping season and sports a

very friendly \$19.99 price-point. An action-based arcade game, "Casper: Friends Around the World" will take kids on an around-the-world adventure to exotic locales.

"Casper: Friends Around the World" fits right in with our focus of publishing entertaining games with deep game play that don't include the typical 'guts and gore'," said David Artuso, producer for Sound Source Interactive Inc. "The combination of action-packed game play and fully polygonal 3D renderings in real time are sure to make 'Casper: Friends Around the World' a hit with young gamers."

Developed by RealTime Associates for kids 5 to 12, "Casper: Friends Around the World" is an action-arcade style game, emphasizing fast-paced game play over lock-and-key puzzle mechanics. The game was developed with an easy, medium and hard component, a style of gaming that gives players at every age and at varying levels of ability the opportunity to have an action-packed experience with just the right amount of challenge. Additionally, the Entertainment Software rating Board has rated it "E" for everyone.

In the game, the evil ghost, Kibosh, casts a wicked spell that banishes Casper's human friends into the far reaches of an ancient geography book. Kids must help Casper save his friends as they fend off ghostly spirits at each level who are determined to thwart his efforts.

Playing as Casper, kids will search for his friends through 10 exotic locations including the Louvre in Paris, the Canals of Venice, the Great Pyramids of Egypt, London's Big Ben, the Great Wall of China and Hollywood's Walk of the Stars.

Secret locations, such as the Lost City of Atlantis, will also be revealed as kids play through the game. But players must beware because Kibosh is no ordinary evil spirit, and Casper will need to call on all of his ghostly abilities to defeat the boss and his evil spooks.

Sound Source Interactive and Harvey Entertainment celebrated Casper's 60th on Oct. 28 with a birthday bash at the Television Academy of Arts and Sciences in Los Angeles where "Casper's Haunted Christmas" and "Casper: Friends Around the World" premiered to invited guests. Other event participants included Baskin Robbins, Orange Julius and Sight for Students, a non-profit charity that supports kids across the country who are neither covered by insurance or who do not qualify for government assistance.

"Midway's Greatest Arcade Hits Volume I" Brings Home Arcade Classics for Nintendo 64

Midway Games Inc. announced that the classic arcade game compilation "Midway's Greatest Arcade Hits Volume 1" for Nintendo 64 will shipped to retail this week.

"Midway's Greatest Arcade Hits Volume 1" takes gamers back in time with six popular arcade titles: "Spy Hunter," "Joust," "Sinistar," "Defender," "Root Beer Tapper" and "Robotron 2084." This one-to-two player game features easy set-up and classic gameplay that will appeal to a wide audience of gamers, old and new.

"Gamers will enjoy playing the classic, 'old school' arcade greats that endeared them to video games," said Helene Sheeler, vice president of

Having worked as a mediating voice with Senator Joseph Lieberman on his annual Video Game Report Card, Kent was able to conduct candid interviews with both Lieberman and Senator Sam Brownback about their hearings on video game violence.

The result of all of these interviews is a high-speed, sprawling study of how video games emerged from unimportant novelty entertainment status to become one of the driving forces shaping the information age. With so many first-hand perspectives, "The First Quarter" sometimes becomes a forum for multiple designers and executives giving conflicting memories of how events occurred. Nolan Bushnell, Al Alcorn, Steve Wozniac, and Masaya Nakamura, for instance, all had different stories about the history of Breakout, and all four versions are included in the book.

"The First Quarter" also includes in-depth studies of the five most influential court cases in the history of video games, complete with excerpts from court documents and interviews with lawyers.

"Toward the end of the project, my biggest problem was trying to decide what stories to leave out. I had great stories about games like Aladdin, Crash Bandicoot, and Yoshi's Island; but I needed to draw the line. The book was getting too big. Two days after I handed the book in for layout, Nintendo announced that its new console would be named Gamecube, not Dolphin, and drawing that line became a really painful task."

Kent's book, which will be available exclusively through Amazon.com and Select gaming outlets, retails for \$21.95.

For more information, contact Steven Kent at stevenkent@aol.com.
The address for links to the Amazon.com page featuring the book is:

[>>](http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0970475500/o/qid=969303972/sr=8-2/ref=a)

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A-ONE's Headline News
The Latest in Computer Technology News
Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

Comdex Light on Tangible Products

With wall-to-wall prototypes and plenty of buzz about Bluetooth wireless technology and mobile Web access, Comdex 2000 was unmistakably light on tangible new products for the here and now.

If nothing else, the annual technology extravaganza heralded the arrival of the mobile Internet appliance, an overgrown handheld computer shaped like a writing tablet, equipped with a touchscreen and a wireless connection.

Other noteworthy offerings included a new palmtop computer based on the Linux operating system, a simple software kit to connect older Palm devices to the Internet via cell phone and a powerful portable hard drive that can

store 6 gigabytes of digital music, photos or computer data files.

National Semiconductor made perhaps the biggest splash of the show in its debut as consumer-oriented company. The venerable chipmaker, borrowing a page from the "Intel Inside" handbook, was showing off a "WebPAD" line of machines based on its Geode GX1 processor made by Honeywell, Samsung and Ericsson.

Large crowds gathered continually at the National Semiconductor pavilion, where they could play with several models and get a glimpse at some further-off prototypes.

The first WebPAD to hit the market, launched a month ago, was Honeywell's \$995 WebPAD Internet Appliance, which connects to a base station in the home or office via HomeRF, short-range radio technology that competes with Bluetooth. While the Honeywell version can be used for basic organizing and Web browsing functions, the company envisions it as the central control for various systems such as lighting, entertainment, temperature and security.

National Semiconductor also unveiled a WebPAD designed in conjunction with Metricom that can connect with the Ricochet wireless network which Metricom has launched in several major cities. National Semiconductor and Metricom are looking for a manufacturer to partner with in producing the device.

Prototype versions of the tablet computer included the MediaScreen from Nokia and the Evita from a small Taiwanese company named InnoLabs.

Elsewhere at the show, there was an entire booth devoted to Bluetooth, the much-hyped short-range wireless technology, but precious few products that will be available any time soon. Almost resembling a tired Las Vegas act, countless companies including Ericsson were demonstrating their wireless Bluetooth headsets for mobile phones.

The story was much the same at most of the exhibits from the heavy hitters in consumer electronics. While the quality of assorted digital audio and video products show continued improvement, most of the "Gee whiz!" was limited to prototypes that may never get made.

Sony, as usual, stole the show in terms of flashy prototypes, displaying a line of "Duo" devices based on its Memory Stick storage technology, including a "Snake" camera and music player that can be strapped around an arm or the head.

Other "Duo" concepts included a silver dollar-size audio player and a Bluetooth organizer and camera combo. There was also a rainbow of small plastic padlock-shaped containers to store Memory Sticks and hang them by color code on a small wrack or even a necklace.

Elsewhere, a company named Agenda was demonstrating its VR3 handheld computer, which that runs on the open-standard Linux operating system. At present there are only about 20 applications for the organizer, a problem the company hopes to address with its recent launch of a software developer's edition for \$179. A market launch is expected by March.

Another nifty gadget was the Digital Wallet from Minds(at)Work, a PDA-shaped storage device with a memory-card slot that's compatible with various digital formats. According to the company, the 6 gigabytes of memory that the \$499 device offers is enough to hold 6,000 high-resolution photos or 110 hours of digital audio, 6,000 novels or 10 CD-ROM games.

The new Palm Mobile Internet Kit, cable not included, is priced at \$39.95. It is a software package to upgrade older Palm III and Palm V devices, as well as newer versions of those products and the recently introduced Palm m100.

A company named Navigata unveiled a wireless device that works as both a mouse and a trackball to move a cursor around a computer screen. The new product, Navigata VX3, sells for \$59.95.

The camera company Olympus was displaying a new version of its Eye-Trek family of video goggles that is designed to work with video game systems such as PlayStation. The FMD-200 Gaming Edition, priced at \$549, is designed to provide the visual quality of a 52-inch big-screen TV.

Philips Electronics was displaying computer monitors with a new "LightFrame" technology that is designed to enhance pictures or video on a computer screen with TV-like qualities.

Cube named Product of the Year

Chalk up another award for Apple's Power Mac G4 Cube. It has been named Product of the Year by Home Office Computing, the technology and productivity magazine for those who work at home.

The mag today announced their selection of the 100 best home office products, services, and sites of 2000 at an award ceremony at the Comdex trade show in Las Vegas. This year marks the third in a row that Home Office Computing has selected a top 100 list based on value, performance, ease of use, innovation, and suitability for home offices.

Winners are divided into a series of categories, and receive a gold, silver or bronze ranking. Each year, Home Office Computing also selects a "Product of the Year."

Apple's 15-inch, flat panel Cinema Display (which is usually overshadowed by its 22-inch cousin) also picked up an award. The US \$999 display won a silver award for in the LCD monitor division.

For more information about Home Office Computing and the award winners go to the magazine's Web site.

Earlier this month Popular Science gave Apple's Power Mac G4 Cube a "Grand Award" in its "Best of What's New 2000" awards. The Cube was also awarded a Design & Engineering Awards 2001 by Popular Mechanics magazine. It was the only computer to win one of the awards.

Board Selects New Internet Names

Hoping to ease the dot-com name crunch, an Internet oversight board Thursday created seven new Web address suffixes, including .biz, .name and .info.

The decision by the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers capped a half-decade of discussion about how to relieve demand for

addresses ending in .com. With some 20 million .com names registered worldwide, easy-to-remember addresses have been all but used up.

The new suffixes, or Internet domain names, are the first major additions since the system was developed in the 1980s. The new suffixes could be in use by the middle of next year.

ICANN approved .info for general use, .biz for businesses, .name for individuals, .pro for professionals, .museum for museums, .coop for business cooperatives and .aero for the aviation industry.

More new suffixes are expected, ICANN chairwoman Esther Dyson said.

There are already "regional" suffixes familiar to most computer users, such as .edu and .gov, which are for educational institutions and government agencies. But .com, .net and .org currently are the only suffixes designated as available to anyone worldwide - and all are getting crowded.

The new suffixes are similar to adding area codes to the national phone system to accommodate growth.

They could make more simple addresses available and Web sites easier to find. A computer user, for example, could someday type ama.health to reach the American Medical Association Web site instead of www.ama-assn.org. The current name is so long because ama.org belongs to the American Marketing Association.

The new suffixes could also begin a new Internet land rush, with speculators and trademark holders competing to claim the best names first. ICANN must now negotiate contracts with companies or groups that made the winning proposals.

New suffixes have been under consideration since the mid-1990s, but there were disputes over how many and which ones. ICANN was designated by the Commerce Department in 1998 as the overseer of online addresses.

For this week's meeting, companies proposing new suffixes paid \$50,000 for the chance to become record keepers for the new names. As registry operators, they would be able to charge a few dollars per name registered, an amount that could add up to millions of dollars for the most popular suffixes.

In all, there were 47 applications for new suffixes.

Board members rejected .kids for children and .health for prescreened health information. They also dismissed .tel for telephone numbers, .geo for Web addresses based on location and .web over concerns that it has already been unofficially registered.

Intel to Announce New Celeron Chips

Intel Corp. will announce its fastest-ever Celeron microprocessors that are slated for personal computers costing less than \$1,000 and cited research claiming that it has 94 percent of the U.S. retail market for cheap desktop PCs.

Santa Clara, Calif.-based Intel is introducing two Celeron chips, one running at 766 megahertz and the other at 733 megahertz. Both use Intel's 0.18 micron manufacturing process, which allows the company to fit more transistors onto a single chip and to get more of them out of a single silicon wafer.

According to a research firm Intel hired, 94 percent of the computers sold that cost less than \$1,000 each use the Intel Celeron process, said NPD Intellect.

Intel's chief rival, Advanced Micro Devices Inc., since the introduction of its speedy Athlon processor, has been successfully competing against the chip giant for more than a year now, by focusing on the performance of its chips. AMD currently has the fastest chip on the market.

In the past, AMD has sought to win against Intel by selling chips that offered nearly comparable performance but at a substantial discount to Intel's, in the range of 25 percent.

AMD, based in Sunnyvale, Calif., now has its own low-cost chip out, called the Duron, which is gaining in popularity among PC makers. Nine of the top 10 PC makers use AMD chips in its computers, with the sole exception of Dell Computer Corp.

The 766 Mhz chip costs \$170 each in lots of 1,000 while the 733 Mhz chip costs \$112 each in lots of 1,000. In 2000, Intel introduced eight Celeron chips for desktop PCs.

Asian Language Web Names Seen Sowing Conflicts

Internet names in Asian languages ending in the coveted ".com" were criticized on Monday at a meeting of the Internet's governing board for being technically premature and encouraging a new wave of cyber-squatting.

VeriSign Inc.'s Global Registry Services, which oversees all Internet addresses such as ".net" and ".org" except those ending in country codes, last week began accepting registrations using Chinese, Japanese, and Korean characters.

Proponents say that VeriSign's system will speed the take-up of the Web outside the English-literate world.

For instance, in China, many popular Web sites are named after significant number combinations. One of China's most popular Web sites is an eBay-type auction site called 8848.net -- 8848 is a play on the height of Mount Everest in meters and the lucky number eight, which sounds like prosperity in Chinese.

Web addresses were generally limited to the 26 letters of the English alphabet, 10 numerals and a hyphen. With VeriSign's system, the multi-lingual addresses are still half in English, using the final ".com" or ".gov" suffix.

Companies that specialize in selling Web domain names reported strong initial demand for Asian language Web site names last week. Register.com, a US-based company, said it had received thousands of applications, both from Asia and from the United States.

But some attendees at the annual meeting of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers said introducing Asian-language domain names now could prove disruptive to an increasingly-overburdened domain name system, as well as being confusing for users. That could lead to misdirected e-mail, disappearing Web sites, and more.

''Too many technologies are confusing. It could cause a big mess," said Qian Hualin, deputy director of the China Network Information Center (CNNIC), the semi-governmental group which oversees Web addresses in China ending in ``.cn."

CNNIC has also launched a similar service letting people register Web sites in Chinese language. This service, as well as similar moves by Korea's Internet administrator, in effect offer a competing system that allows the whole address, including the suffix, to be written using no English.

The Chinese government, along with the Internet Society, a U.S.-based non-profit group, criticized the introduction of VeriSign's multilingual service.

The Internet Society put out a strongly worded statement, calling VeriSign's current testing ``premature under the technical standards of the Internet" and asking it to delay its launch until its engineering group works out compatibility standards.

That's a charge that security software maker VeriSign, which entered the Web domain business when it bought Network Solutions earlier this year for \$20 billion, disputes.

The Internet Society's ``concerns are not warranted," said Brian O'Shaughnessy, a spokesman for VeriSign.

He acknowledged that VeriSign's technical infrastructure allowing domain names to be translated back and forth between English and other languages was still buggy, but said the system would be glitch-free by its expected launch by year end.

''We don't want to hurt the Net in any way," he said. ``No e-mails will get lost."

What's at stake are millions -- if not billions -- in dollars of revenue from the increasingly-lucrative business of signing up Web sites. For instance, sales of domain names and related services made up an estimated half of VeriSign's \$173.1 million in revenue in its third quarter ended September 30.

Besides Web addresses that end in country codes, such as ".uk" for the United Kingdom, there are currently seven top-level domain names. But ICANN's board of directors this week will rule on the addition of a number of new Web domains. Proposed ones include .kids, .geo, .xxx and others.

Critics say those possible new domain names, along with the just-introduced multilingual domain names, highlights VeriSign and ICANN's inadequate policies to prevent cybersquatters -- people who buy up Web site names in the hopes of auctioning them off later for high prices.

''First come and first serve is the wrong way to approach it," said Naseem Javed, an expert on corporate trademarks and branding. Creating new foreign language domain names will "multiply the problem."

Pirated Software Subject of Suit

A software trade group that conducted an online anti-piracy sting sued 13 Americans Monday, alleging they sold bootleg software worth tens of thousands of dollars on Internet auction sites.

The Business Software Alliance, which represents software companies like Microsoft Corp., Macromedia Inc. and Adobe Systems Inc., conducted the worldwide sting operation to fend off pirates and educate consumers. CD-ROM recorders and high-speed Internet connections have made it easy for bootleggers to peddle illegally copied software quickly and cheaply.

"Many of the people who once sold pirated software programs at flea markets have now moved to Internet auction sites in the hopes of reaching online consumers," said Bob Kruger, vice president of enforcement at the BSA. "In the great majority of cases, what you see is not what you get, and what you get is illegal."

The sting is a new angle to the group's efforts, which had targeted Web sites and chat channels. Just last month, the Federal Trade Commission listed auction scams among its top 10 "dot-con" ploys for consumers to avoid.

The suit, filed in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California, was brought after the Washington-based BSA paid about \$1,600 over several months for software that sells in stores for more than \$50,000. The defendants face damages of up to \$150,000 for each program they sold.

In most cases, the software was shown in online advertisements in a boxed package, but arrived as a single CD-ROM with the program name and its serial number written in marker on one side of the disk.

In one instance, an auction offered full versions of 21 expensive, advanced Web design and graphics programs. The programs that arrived were jammed onto two CD-ROMs clearly made by a home CD-ROM recorder.

Some of the packages also contained advertisements to buy more pirated software. Although programs such as the new Microsoft Windows 2000 operating system and Adobe's Photoshop graphics program both cost hundreds of dollars, none of the advertised CD-ROMs were advertised for over \$60.

By punishing the defendants, the BSA hopes that the effort will show consumers how they can be taken online. While the programs are cheap, Kruger warns that consumers won't get product support or upgrade offers, and the CD-ROMs are likely to contain viruses.

"In some cases, you can make the case that the consumer is as much of a victim as the publisher," Kruger said in an interview with The Associated Press.

The BSA has several tips for consumers to be more aware of how to spot pirated software. Among them are to watch out for products labeled as "academic" or "backup" versions, programs that don't contain manuals or other documentation, and software titles from different publishers on a single disk.

The trade group also warns that if the price is too good to be true, it probably is.

The most egregious example the BSA found in its sting was a pirated copy of Adobe FontFolio, a collection of printing typefaces. It retails for about \$8,000 but was auctioned for only \$50.

The group says the business software industry loses about \$13 billion to piracy annually.

''People think that it's just open season on software publishers," Kruger said, ''and they've been given no cause to think differently."

Auction companies such as Yahoo! and eBay are aware that pirated software is sold on their sites, but cannot always tell from the auction description if the software is illegal. Though they stop questionable auctions that they find, there can be too many to deal with.

''We're trying to maintain a very open and well-lit marketplace, and the reality is that the great majority of people who buy and sell on eBay follow the rules," said Kevin Pursglove, spokesman for the online auction company. ''But there are some people who won't follow the rules, and will try to avoid them no matter how many times we tell them."

Software publishers share that overwhelmed feeling.

''You almost feel like you're navigating a boat that keeps springing another leak," Kruger said. ''It's a constant challenge to stay ahead of technologies."

MP3.com Pays \$53.4 Million to End Copyright Suit

MP3.com agreed Tuesday to pay \$53.4 million to end its copyright infringement suit with Seagram's Universal Music Group in a deal approved by a federal judge just minutes before a scheduled trial to assess damages in the case.

The accord means that MP3.com has mended fences with all five of the major record labels over its My.MP3.com music storage locker service. Although the company may still be required to work out claims by some smaller labels, any future payouts are expected to be minor compared with the litigation resolved to date.

Under the consent judgment, MP3.com gets a license to deliver the entire Universal Music Group catalog over its My.MP3.com service. In addition to the cash award, Universal will receive warrants to buy an undisclosed number of shares in MP3.com at a valuation above the current market price. Although precise figures were not released, MP3.com chief executive Michael Robertson said Universal will own less than 20 percent of the company if it chooses to exercise all of the warrants.

The judgment "really moves us forward and gets us out of the courtroom and back into the delivery of music," Robertson said.

He added that all of the company's payments to date related to legal problems from My.MP3.com amount to less than \$170 million--the amount of

cash MP3.com had set in reserve to handle copyright claims.

Tuesday's accord lifts an enormous cloud that had been hanging over MP3.com.

The company has pushed to create legal business models for selling music online and is known primarily for creating a place where unknown artists can showcase their music on the Web. But it stumbled into a legal quagmire when it created My.MP3.com, a database of some 80,000 songs that could be tapped over the Internet by customers who proved they had purchased the same music on a CD.

Unlike rival music locker services such as Myplay.com, MP3.com did not require customers to copy their own CDs but provided a ready-made database of songs. It also did not secure licensing deals with record companies before launching the service.

All five of the major labels--Universal, Sony Music Group, Bertelsmann's BMG Entertainment, Warner Music Group and EMI Recorded Music--filed suit when the service was launched, charging massive copyright violations.

The company settled its differences with the other four major record labels for undisclosed amounts and with the National Music Publishers' Association, leaving Universal as the sole holdout.

As the case proceeded, Universal scored several key wins.

MP3.com was first held liable for infringing Universal's copyrights and then ordered to pay \$25,000 for each violation. Universal had claimed as many as 10,000 counts, potentially putting MP3.com on the hook for some \$250 million. MP3.com had put the total around 4,700 CDs, leaving the company open to as much as \$118 million in damages.

Immigrant Settles Unfair Labor Suit

A Cambodian immigrant fired for refusing to make electronic parts at home for less than the minimum wage has settled an unfair labor practices suit with a Silicon Valley company.

Financial terms of the settlement were sealed, but attorneys said Monday it was the first suit challenging the electronics industry's widespread practice of paying below minimum wage to employees working from home.

The use of immigrants to make electronic parts at home has been widespread in Silicon Valley since the early 1980s. At least a dozen local contract manufacturers, ranging from small companies to multibillion-dollar giants, have been involved in so-called piecework arrangements by which workers are paid for each item assembled, rather than by the hour.

The contract companies often are hired by major computer companies to produce parts for larger components.

Those parts sometimes are made or assembled at home, on kitchen tables or in garage workshops. The mostly immigrant labor force sometimes is paid as little as a penny per component, sometimes barely earning minimum wage, and gets no overtime for work that can be hazardous.

The settled suit involved Kamsan Mao, 33, who alleged his former employer, Top Line Electronics in San Jose, forced him to work from home at night and on weekends after his daily eight-hour shifts.

Mao alleged he was paid less than minimum wage, sometimes as little as \$5 for three hours of labor, as he built and repaired power supplies that went into computers eventually sold to computer giants Compaq Computer and Dell Computer, who were not named in the suit.

The practice is not illegal, but the pay rate must mesh with minimum wage and overtime laws.

In addition, Mao said he was exposed to noxious fumes from chemical cleansers and the smoke of soldering irons.

''As with sweatshops in the garment industry, the electronics assembly industry depends upon the work of hundreds of low-wage, immigrant workers," said Hina Shah, an attorney for the Asian Law Caucus. ''This settlement should send a clear message to the industry that workers like Mr. Mao will not suffer in silence."

While Mao's plight is similar to other immigrant high-tech workers, other workers feared reprisal if they sued, said Mao's attorney, Doris Ng, of Equal Rights Advocates.

Ng said that many employers in the electronics assembly industry are taking advantage of low-wage workers, banking on the assumption that they will not complain. Other immigrant employees working under similar conditions at Top Line declined to join the suit, she said.

''None of them were interested in pursuing a complaint. A lot of workers were fearful of complaining against their employer and some of them are happy to get work and are desperate to make ends meet in San Jose," Ng said.

As part of the agreement, announced Monday, Top Line has agreed to stop at-home work for its employees. Carolyn Knox, the company's attorney on the case, was not immediately available for comment.

Mao was not available for comment, but last year said the case was important to him and ''to all the other people who worked like I did or who are still working like that but not getting paid what they should."

The suit followed Mao's 1998 layoff after complaining he did not want to work from home.

IBM To Debut Computer Recycling

A vast glut of obsolete computer equipment was all but inevitable in an era in which a common cliché is that your new computer is outdated by the time you get it home. Now IBM Corp., one of the world's biggest computer makers, hopes to provide relief to a problem some environmentalists see as one of the biggest solid waste issues to emerge in decades.

Armonk, N.Y.-based IBM on Tuesday kicked off a program aimed specifically at individual consumers and small business owners, two sizable groups of computer users that up to now have struggled to find ways to rid themselves

of unwanted computer hardware.

A recent study by the National Safety Council's Environmental Health Center estimated that 20.6 million personal computers became obsolete in the U.S. in 1998, but only 11 percent, or 2.3 million of those PCs, were recycled. Moreover, the NSC estimates that 315 million additional computers will become outdated by 2004.

For years, most of the unwanted personal computer equipment in this country has gathered dust in attics and garages. On a larger scale, the industry's solution has been to ship much of the unwanted and environmentally dangerous parts to China, where weak environmental laws allow for a cheap but hazardous method of disposal.

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